

WASHINGTON- Today, the U.S. House of Representatives is expected to pass a measure supported by Congresswoman Gwen Moore that will prevent a Medicare physician pay cut from taking effect on July 1.

“As most physicians know, this bill only provides a temporary fix for a long term problem,” said Congresswoman Gwen Moore. “Without diligent work from members from both sides of the aisle, we will be in this exact same predicament 18 months from now. Medicare is the lifeline for millions of seniors and we need to ensure that the physicians who care for them are compensated for their services.”

The bill would prevent a 10.6 % pay cut to physicians and other health care providers that treat Medicare patients. Due to the skyrocketing costs of treating patients, this important legislation also includes a 1.1% reimbursement increase for Medicare physicians that will take effect in January 2009. The bill also includes important beneficiary improvements such as Medicare mental health parity, improved preventive coverage, and enhanced assistance for low-income beneficiaries. Finally, this bill eliminates cuts to oxygen and wheelchair payments for Medicare recipients.

“In recent months we have begun hearing from seniors who are having difficulty finding doctors willing to accept Medicare patients. There are millions of American families who can’t see a doctor because they don’t have adequate insurance. It’s common to hear about children whose only access to healthcare is through the emergency room. People are hurting. Preventing the current 10.6% Medicare physician payment cuts is a commonsense first step, but it can’t be the last,” said Rep. Moore.

If passed, this bill would then be considered by the Senate, who must act before physician cuts go into effect on July 1.

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